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working-classes to-day. It gains its influence not by presenting them with wider issues and stronger sympathies, which would enable them to harmonize their lives with that of the community, and so to share in as well as to advance its progress; but by concentrating the attention of the class upon its narrower self, and by exciting disintegrating emotions. The elements of a prosperous and progressive community must play into, support, and recognize each other just as the elements of a sane and progressive mind must support and recognize each other. The growth of wider interests should mean, not the suppression, but the fuller development of narrower ones; and what is needed in social as in individual life is the introduction of organizing and not of disintegrating ideas.

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LONDON.

THE MORAL LIFE OF THE EARLY ROMANS.

THE historian of morals sets about a task which is almost impossible. For its accomplishment several things are necessary; yet they can rarely be attained. He must know the forms in which, from time to time, the moral ideal presented itself, the adverse influences to which it was opposed, and the amount of the effort which the individual spirit made to reach it. These difficulties are so great that some have almost forbidden us to pass judgment upon the moral character of a single human being; much more, therefore, ought we to hesitate in passing judgment upon a whole nation. At any rate, we ought to express our conclusions in terms that answer to the uncertainty and difficulty of the argument. For we have to deal not so much with facts as with the relations that hold between them; not so much with actions as with their value. Everything depends, then, upon our applying suitable standards and upon our viewing things in their proper perspective. Hence we shall begin by marking off the place of Rome in the moral education of the world so that we may come to her life with the right expectation, and may not demand attain-

ments from her which only became possible when her career was already half done. After a short historical account directed to this end, we shall be able to go on and describe the moral life of the early Romans.

The history of the moral ideal has been sketched by Green in one of the most interesting portions of the "Prolegomena to Ethics." * He sought, however, to lay down the principles of right conduct rather than to describe the life of the good citizen in its fulness and variety. He was thus led to dwell upon the contribution made by Greek thought to the moral life of the present, and to pass over what we owe to another source, the ancient temperament of the Romans. The Greek thinkers, as he says, have delineated once for all "the articulated scheme of what the virtues and duties are in their difference and in their unity." † And we might imagine that the bequest of Rome scarcely deserved to be set along-side of it. This, however, would be a mistaken idea. Sentiments which seem to have entered into the very fibre of the modern mind, and to all appearance are not to be marked off from the rest of our psychological heritage, can yet be traced to foreign sources as we travel up the stream of tradition, and we shall wonder, perhaps, to find so much that seems special to the Anglo-Saxon, anticipated in the primitive Italian. It might even be urged that in the realm of practice we owe more to Rome than to Greece. For while the Grecian moralists have influenced the leaders only of modern thought, the Roman ideal has been operating upon the general mind. The renaissance, in its wide-spread effects, has so far been Roman in the main; the Greek has yet to come forth from the very narrow field to which it is still confined. At first or second hand we have all been to school to Cicero and Virgil, Horace and Livy. The literature of modern Europe bears their imprint almost upon every page. And we have learned from them something more than the bare facts of Roman history, or the legends of Rome decked out with Greek mythology. We have acquired a point of view and a standard of judgment

* Bk. iii. c. 5.

† Ibid. p. 249.

which we apply without remembering whence we drew them. Hence, while the form of modern ideas about conduct is of Greek origin, their content is largely Roman. This is more evident outside the field of literature of which it is so easy to over-estimate the influence. It is in the institutions and laws of the civilized world that the Roman spirit still lives. Above all, it has entered into the Christian religion. That the forms of the imperial administration were mirrored in the ordinances of the early church was but the symbol of something deeper. Nearly all that was best in the social life of the empire was assimilated by the Christian community. The early fathers recognized a spirit kindred with their own in the sanctities of the Roman family, and were met half-way by their antagonists of the better kind.* The patriotic Roman, who dwelt fondly upon the religion of Numa and sought to restore it, could not overlook the resemblance between his aspirations and the new rule of conduct. Once more, it might seem to him, the marriage tie was regarded as sacred ; once more the minds of the young were shielded from pollution ; and the passionate communion with the dead upon which the religion of primitive times was based, revived in the life of the catacombs and the veneration of martyrs.

You object, perhaps, that there is too little evidence about the spiritual life of the earlier ages, and that such evidence as we possess in the extant literature is too far penetrated with Greek influences to be trustworthy. The answer is not far to seek. The influence of Greece upon Rome was on the surface. Outside the capital and the large towns the current of existence in Italy changed its course very slightly. To take the history of the city for that of Italy is like our habit of thinking that Paris represents the French nation. The fevered capital might spend itself in the huge schemes of ambitious generals, in the turbulence of the forum, in the vulgar excess which is the shadow of wealth quickly acquired, in the unscrupulous self-seeking which shrank from no sacrifice of life. But there was many a spot where the years were still

* Aug. De Civ. v. c. 12, Laet. v. c. 5.

passed in a more tranquil fashion. The accents with which Virgil and Livy speak to us are those of the northern plains; where, it would seem, that the settlers of Piacenza and Cremona had transmitted to their descendants the frugality, soberness, and reverence which could be found even at Rome before the second war with Carthage. Horace, with somewhat less sympathy, describes the life of his neighbors in the valley of the Licenza; but the tone of the picture is almost the same. And Cicero in the essay on "Old Age" depicts a country life which resembles the ideal of the "Georgics" very closely. It is no mere accident that these four names that, for us, seem to sum up the world in which the Roman lived, are the names of men born in the country and steeped in its traditions. It was upon this treasury of wisdom, courage, and patriotism that Rome drew continually, and her downfall was begun already when she had exhausted the rural population of Italy.

It is possible to fix the moment at which the Romans passed from agriculture to the life of the large towns. During the long war with Hannibal the farmers suffered severely. Their land lay uncultivated. Their homesteads fell into ruin. Their fruit-bearing trees had been cut down; a serious matter in the case of the olive which required so many years to reach maturity. This disorganization of agriculture coincided with the opening up of new corn supplies; the harvests of Sicily and Egypt became the rivals of the Italian crops, just as, at the present time, Argentina and India compete with the farmers of Norfolk and Lincolnshire. The land passed out of cultivation into a wildness worse than primæval, or was worked in huge stretches by slave labor. Meanwhile the old population drifted to the capital or the nearest large town and was merged into the seething masses of hangers-on.

Of course, there were reasons, other than those of economics, for the ending of the ancient order. The world could not be governed by an assembly of farmers coming to their market-town from time to time. But the change, necessary as it was, brought with it grave dangers, and it is not altogether the professional pessimism of the moralist which leads the Augustan writers to speak in such bitter terms of the prevail-

ing degeneracy. The deeply-marked contrast between town and country helped to give weight to their indictment. And this contrast explains the methods by which the emperors sought to bring back the harmonious and peaceful social order of the early republic. The settlement of veterans, which plays so large a part in the politics of the empire, was an attempt to reproduce the colonization of the republican era. The agrarian measures of Augustus went hand in hand with his revival of the old religion and with the laws against luxury. The contemporary poets were pressed into his service, and they represented the virtues of the old yeomen in such a light that it seemed as if the one remedy for the ills of the state was to go back to the land, whereupon, as though by magic, piety, righteousness, and simple manners would once more flourish side by side.

There is no reason to doubt that Augustus was sincere in these aspirations; yet he still waits to have justice done to him. As the "*Idylls of the King*" limned somewhat faintly the amiable features of the prince consort, or as the "*Faery Queen*" presented three centuries ago the perils and triumphs of Elizabeth, so in the hero of the "*Æneid*" the understanding reader may apprehend the mystic figure of the emperor who hoped to find a cure for the wounds of the Roman world by recourse to the ancient springs of Roman life. The poet was nearer the truth than he perhaps intended. The buffetings which fate dealt out to Æneas were in some kind a prophecy of the gloom which gathered round the last years of Augustus. The successive deaths of his appointed heirs and the calamity of Varus chastened him with a melancholy that atoned almost for the license and savagery of his youth. But the sunset of his life carried with it the promise of a fairer future; the historian who lights upon the age of the Antonines as an oasis in the desert of human misery will not refuse to acknowledge the services of Augustus. He was the second founder of the city, the father of his country, the law-giver who reinforced the trembling hopes of the lovers of peace with the magic splendor of ancient ritual and the benign compulsion of a world-wide security.

Two centuries later, when the cycle of ancient civilization had attained its Indian summer and, under all the gorgeousness of its outward show, was hastening to decay, another emperor dreamed of curing the ailments of the state by recourse to the religion of Numa. Once more it was the fashion to enact the quaint drama of a ritual barely understood. But the interval that had elapsed since the death of Augustus had left its mark. The surging populace of the metropolis sought religious satisfaction in the worships that come crowding in from the east, and the revival of Marcus was exposed to a rivalry tenfold greater than that which befell the efforts of Augustus. While the somewhat cold statesmanship of the latter reflected in very deed the underlying spirit of the old order, Marcus Aurelius viewed the sacred tradition from the stand-point of the later Stoics, which was certainly not the stand-point of his subjects. For he combined with the practical instincts of the great ruler a strange aloofness of the spirit; a withdrawal from the world of actual life which anticipated the solicitude of the hermits of the Thebaid. The religious ceremonial, which seemed to Augustus the expression of a comely and ordered existence, was to Marcus but a concession to social needs and fell short of the cravings of the truly wise "citizen of the world," who knew himself to be a participant in the universal reason. For Augustus, the exterior conduct of life according to the ancient custom was everything; for Marcus, the interior experience had become so rich in capacities, vocations, duties, that the actual institutions of Rome retreated into the background as but a partial embodiment of the human spirit; venerable as conveying to us the voice of the wise past, and deserving to endure, but needing to be placed in subordination to the God who dwelt in each man's breast. The primitive life of Rome was echoed not inaudibly in the reforms of Augustus, but it could scarcely be recognized in the stoic ideals of the imperial solitary; while it was lost—only to resound more deeply—in the diapason of the Christian experience.

The reader is now able to measure the allowances that we must make in judging the moral life of the early Roman. We

shall begin by watching his religion at work.* For in whatever guise the scheme of human duties presents itself to the moral philosopher, they have most authority over the average human being, and are acquiesced in with least reluctance, when they offer themselves as the ordinances of religion. The life of early Rome was a religious one throughout. Amid all its outward change and turmoil it was guided by powers of which we are told so little, just because they were so familiar. Each act was put under the protection of a particular spirit and therefore had a sanctity of its own. The minds which were susceptible to imaginative promptings lived in an unbroken fellowship with those spirits who drew near so punctually at each critical moment. The reaper in the fields, the vine-dresser on the sunny hill-side, the traveller about to commit himself to the dangers of fresh scenes; each, from hour to hour, invoked the kind offices of that mysterious being who watched over the undertaking of each moment. This belief joined with the respect for the traditions of the ancestors to render custom strangely rigid. If the citizen varied from the practice handed down from the fathers, he provoked the displeasure of the spirit whose help was needful for success. Life seemed, therefore, a perpetual sacrament in which every operation was consecrated and transfigured by divine presences. The good citizen who in those ancient times was also his own priest, and needed no intermediary, never put off his sacerdotal character. He performed acts of worship many times each day. In the light of this fact, no doubt can be felt by those who have watched the effect exercised by ritual upon the mind of the devotee, that the religious faith of the Roman—meaning by this a visionary realization of the objects of his worship—was exceedingly intense, if not very articulate, and operated upon every part of his being. Not only was his life guided by these somewhat formless powers, it was beset with a great society of departed kinsmen. The Roman lived in perpetual remembrance of his ancestors. Until the custom

* The evidence for these statements about Roman religion will be found in the writer's "Worship of the Romans," pp. 52-73 and 134-136.

was forbidden by the Twelve Tables, they were buried near the dwelling. In later ages the wax masks of the deceased, which were disposed in small cases round the atrium, nourished the same sentiment as that more primitive custom which made a mortuary chapel of the home. Each day some fragments of the chief meal were set aside for the ghostly enjoyment of the dead. Throughout the year there were also stated festivals, in which resort was made to the tombs which lay beyond the city walls; on the solemn *Feast of the Dead*; the *Day of Violets*, when stocks and wall-flowers were laid upon the tomb; and the *Day of Roses*. The citizen was thus one in a great company of which the departed far out-numbered the living. If we wished to enter into his mind, we might well transport ourselves to one of those great burial societies, under whose forms the Roman Christians lived their hidden life. Nay, more; the early churches presented, as a whole, the profoundest likeness to the Roman family. For within the limits of the latter, life was lived, as in a religious community. Each family had its sacred traditions. The father of the family was guarded in his prerogatives by the jealousy which all innovations in religion aroused. The public sentiment forbade even the chief pontiff to tamper with the ritual of the Roman hearth. This respect for the living head of the house gathered up into itself the awe which attached to the memory of his predecessors, and aggrandized *the fatherly power* almost beyond all limit. But this power was continued only to the man who kept faithfully the custom of the elders whose representative he was, and a law, not the less powerful that it was unwritten, enjoined upon him in each moment of serious decision to take the advice of others who belonged to the same community.

Any act which threatened the well-being or the continuance of the family, aroused a resentment the strength of which was proportioned to the intensity of the family feeling. Although it is difficult to estimate the relative purity of manners, the infrequency of divorce under the early republic, seems to indicate that the marriage tie was observed very strictly, at least on the wife's part. The husband, however,

did not regard himself as bound to an equal strictness, and used the license accorded to him in all slave-holding nations, whether under the patriarchal conditions of ancient Palestine or in the Mohammedan countries of the present. In spite of this, the Roman home was the centre of a life self-reverent and self-controlled. The authority of the father—which continued to be exercised over the adult sons of the house—and the tranquillity which in the main marked the civil life of Rome, braced up the will, and the older city was less scorched by the flames of passion than the generation that knew Clodius and Fulvia, Catullus and Mark Antony. But when the ancient manners broke down, and some of the checks were removed from the hot Italian temperament, it found its expression in the wild dissoluteness of the capital and of the haunts of pleasure that arose round the bay of Naples.

Even the avarice, of which we shall see the evils, gained some dignity when it succeeded in handing down the patrimony unimpaired or even increased. Native wisdom tried to build ramparts against the spendthrift heir. "Generosity has no bottom." "Frugality is as good as a revenue," said another old saw. "What you do not need is dear at a farthing" was a favorite maxim of Cato. But if these hints failed, the indignant relatives might appeal to the prætor, and take control of an estate from the hands that wielded it badly. Another quality which at first view is repellent, the suspicious treatment of strangers, showed the same exclusiveness on the part of the family as that which characterized the state. It had its ground in the strict severance that limited the ritual of each family to its members. These habits of quiet self-mastery, of parsimony, of caution, are thus derivable, in large measure, from the constitution of Roman society. When the citizen wavered in the hour of deliberation he could fall back upon the custom of the elders, knowing well that on the whole it would serve his own best interests.

The religion of the Roman, therefore, while it depended in part upon his surroundings, was to a much larger extent the outcome of his temperament. For him religion was the vehicle by which each generation of elders imposed upon the

succeeding age its own modes of thought, feeling, and conduct. It was the national spirit forever embodying itself in the citizen. Hence the moral life, which was determined so much by his religion, was not imposed upon him only from without. It was the joint product of his nature, and of the environment upon which it reacted. We have reviewed the internal factor in this process. We have now to take account of external influences, of economical and political conditions. In proceeding to the first of these tasks, we shall be occupied specially with the moral effects of the agricultural system of early Rome.

Virgil, in two of the noblest passages of Latin poetry,* claims boldly that the greatness of Rome proceeded from her farmers. "The country," he says, "was the last spot traversed by Justice in her wanderings before she left the earth forever. It was the home of piety towards the gods and of the family life. It was the teacher of temperance and of endurance, and imparted that best of gifts, peace of mind unruffled by care." Yet even while we are lulled by the chime of Virgil's verse, we must remind ourselves that he was above all things a consummate and conscious artist. His hand was practised (to change the figure) in portraying rural life with glowing tones. It is to his "Eclogues" that the country owes the fanciful glamour that has been cast over it, and the ancestors of the dainty figures of Watteau are found in the shepherds and ploughmen of Virgil. Even his shadows are relieved with changing hues and the contrast thrown by them is too faint. We must complete for ourselves the picture drawn by him and emphasize the dark patches which he passed over.

Rustic frugality lent itself to the growth of avarice of the worst kind. It was not content with bare hoarding. The yeoman with spare capital employed it in obtaining a lien upon the farm of his struggling neighbor. As he prospered, he sacrificed the duties of the patriot to the instincts of the money-lender and land-grabber. The poor farmer, for example, whose land had been ravaged by a hostile incursion soon

* Georg. II., 136 ff., 458 ff.

had to regret the treacherous assistance of his neighbor. The high rate of interest made it impossible for all but a few to discharge their debts. The debtor lost homestead and land; while his disasters were crowned by slavery, his person passing as security into his creditor's power. The agitations caused by this odious slavery were already stirring the state to its depths in the years that followed the expulsion of the kings. On one occasion, as a levy was being held in the market-place, a centurion appeared emaciated and in rags, who was recognized as having performed some noted feats of arms against the enemies of the republic. His history was like that of many another. He had borrowed money to pay the war tax. He was unable to return the loan, and his creditors—acting, it is true, within their rights—had arrested him and imposed the hardest slave labor upon him. He escaped from prison, and presented himself amid his fellows just as they were about to take the field again. The rising feelings of the people compelled the government to take steps to remedy the injustice. It was a like fault of temper that in later times took greedy advantage of the privileges of office, and looted the provinces. The Sabine nurture which was sometimes compared with that of the Spartans, resembled it for evil as well as for good. The temptations of political service abroad were too much for it. The proconsuls who plundered Asia and Sicily were of the same bent as Pausanias and Lysander.

This hardness of temper was made more intense by the institution of slavery. An easy optimism may prefer to dwell upon those aspects of history which are merely interesting, and may use on occasion the tragedies of human lot to keep alert an idle curiosity. But in the Roman world there were abysses of suffering which spread downward, circle after circle, into a hell the mere sight of which, to a modern, is a torture. And although the condition of the Roman slave was not so bad in the days before the second war with Carthage, as it afterwards became, it would be difficult to paint it in too lurid colors. He was far worse off than in Greece, where the law stepped in to secure him from the worst forms of injustice. At Rome he was absolutely in the power of his master. The fierce verses

of Juvenal show us how the Roman owner regarded his relation to the slave.

"Crucify him !

"What is the slave charged with ? Where is the witness ? O listen ! No delay is too long if the matter is of a man's death.

"You are mad. Is the slave then a man ? Though he be guiltless, it is my will to punish. I command it. My caprice is reason enough !"

The Roman who was scrupulous in carrying out his lawful obligations, and in exacting their performance from others, had no guiding principle beyond the limits of the law, and the heart left thus to itself, *pectus sibi permissum*, revealed, as it were, the human tiger athirst for blood. The reader who thinks this an exaggeration, may be invited to consider all that was involved in the taste for gladiatorial shows. There seems some reason for holding that such a taste is the outcome of mental disease in the literal sense, and that the Roman temperament was abnormal in this particular. It is extraordinary that a nation in which the respect for law and for constitutional methods was great, should have reconciled itself to the violence which marked its political life. Assassination was a recognized party weapon. An advocate, in the presence of a Roman tribunal, enumerated as admitted precedents the successive murders of the Roman reformers from Cassius to Gaius Gracchus.* This complacency, incredible and even fatuous as it appears now, was shared by his contemporaries. The horrors of the proscriptions and of the civil wars, in which the Roman nation literally committed suicide, bear many of the marks of insanity. Unless this fact is realized, the meaning of the downfall of the Republic is understood only in part. It is this failure to understand it, that has caused the charges of insincerity, which have been urged against the poets in whom the age of Pharsalia and Philippi found a voice. The denunciations of civil war and the praises of the ruler who promised to give peace to the world, have only too much meaning when they can be interpreted by the ruined solitudes of a once populous and flourishing country-side.

* Cic. Pro Mil., 83.

It is a paradox of the moral life that great crimes may have for their authors those in whom great excellences are also found. For the sympathies may be blunted in some directions and retain their freshness in others. The Roman who was so great within the narrower limits of his tradition could yet come short of the social ideal to the extent that has just been indicated. But we must not be surprised beyond measure at his callousness. The progress of the humane feelings is a very slow one, and a year that has seen a Christian nation tortured to death with the connivance of the Russian foreign office, amid the sullen indifference of the rest of Europe, makes the task of measuring this progress somewhat difficult. It will be granted, however, that the Romans were backward. Even the sensitive Virgil finds no place in hell for the cruel slave-driver.* The lesson of human equality and brotherhood had to be brought to Rome by the Stoics; one of those services of the Greek philosophy which may be set over against the ridicule which Roman wiseacres of the old school directed against it.

The fashion of being callous to the sufferings of the slave may be understood if we look at the institution for a moment with the eyes of a master. Slave labor in the ancient world performed many of the offices which are now taken over by mechanical inventions. For the building contractor it moved huge masses of material. For the merchant it rowed the cargo-boats when the wind failed. Even the cheapening of books, which we owe to the printing-press, was anticipated by the great companies of copyists who worked for publishers like Atticus and the Sosii. Such a civilization had a precarious footing, and moved, as it were, over the fiery ashes of a volcano. The rising of Spartacus had shown the masters what they might expect if their chattels gained the upper hand. Any sympathy therefore which might be expressed for the slaves was met by deep distrust. Only in this way can we account for the strange silence of the Roman writers in the face of so iniquitous a system.

* Cf. *Æneid*, vi. 608, ff.

In matters of reason, however, the feelings are treacherous guides, and need to be sharply disciplined. We must free ourselves from the passion of the partisan and of the enthusiast if we would use the judgment of the historian. If, thus prepared, we ascend *the watch-towers lofty and serene rampired by the learning of the wise*, we may perhaps discern the confused tangle of human affairs ordering itself into the forward march of the race. The untold miseries of millions of slaves have gone forever to swell the mysterious record of pain which, so we would persuade ourselves, is kept somewhere. But these sufferings were not wholly in vain. They aided the establishment of a better condition of life. The sentimentalist, whose view of the whole of human affairs can always be blinded when he is touched by sympathy for the individual, may find in slavery an argument against the providential government of the world. Yet even here we may observe the slow harmony of discordant elements gaining strength as the civilization of Rome takes shape. Slavery was one of the means by which Rome absorbed into herself the neighboring populations that she might free them afterwards. More than this, the happy life of the country-side had been sustained by the labor of slaves. Through the alchemy of man's instinct for the ideal, however, the convention of a slave-holding class was transmuted in the verse of Virgil into the dream of an age of gold, and the poet traced, as with the hand of Fra Lippo Lippi, the delicate outlines of a pure and simple family life upon a background of vines and roses. The hues of this picture have entered into the beautiful mirage of universal happiness which sustains the hopes and efforts of the social reformer, and have become a possession forever. But those whose ears are quickened can catch the wail of the slave whose misery was part of the price by which so much was purchased.

We have thus traced some of the conditions of country life in their effect upon the Roman character. Let us now pass to the life of the town. Here, too, we shall find an ideal: the apparition of a perfect city hovering over the coarser reality. There is a somewhat curious relation between this and the picture Virgil had drawn of happy meadows and corn-fields.

The failings of the countryman strengthened by contrast the advantages which were offered by the life of great cities, just as the evils of the latter set in relief what was best in the country. When the Romans began to mingle in the politics of the Levant, they felt their uncouthness and want of tact before the more polished Greeks. The rough Italian homespun showed strangely against the particolored tapestry of existence as it was passed in the beautiful capitals of the East, where the human drama was enacted by characters less strong indeed but more sensitive and subtle. The Romans who sat at the feet of these foreign teachers sought to combine a native manliness with the new culture. The Latin language seized upon the special quality of the change thus brought about in the term *urbanitas*: the quintessence of city life wafted from the East. But the great centres of government, industry, and culture offered something more than finished manners. They impressed upon their denizens common interests and inevitable sympathies. Hence the visions of the religious and political reformer clothed themselves in the guise of some great city, where multitudes—the despised *many*—shared in common rights and duties. The *world city*, of which the earlier Stoics speak, and *the dear city of Zeus*, which Marcus Aurelius commends to the love of the good man, are extensions of the ideal city life to the dimensions of the world. The source of these visions is not far to seek. They are reflections from the great foundations of Alexander and his successors. Even *the New Jerusalem* of the *Apocalypse* is in great part a kaleidoscopic dream of Antioch and Ephesus, where various marbles were mirrored in the waters of the Orontes and Cayster, and where the streets were shaded for the passer-by with dark green foliage and golden fruit disposed against the dazzling blue. The difference between the old and the new is almost summed up in the passage from paganism, the religion of the village, to Christianity, the religion of the town; from the Rome of Numa to the City of God.

We are no longer concerned, then, with the merely material conditions of life. The economical changes produced by the assemblage of large masses yield in importance to moral

changes. It is only in the light of these that we can understand the political conditions of the Roman character in its successive developments.

Although a certain hardness of temper made it impossible that he should gain as much emotional stimulus from civic opportunities as the more sympathetic Greek, the Roman was more successful within the limits imposed by his nature. What he lost in tenderness and the sense of the infinite he gained in firm and clear perception. In justice to him it must be remembered that while the Syrian and the Greek furnished that enthusiasm of humanity which fused the ancient world into one, it was the Roman who guided this process by his laws. The very narrowness of the Roman's outlook by concentrating his attention upon his immediate business rendered him the best instrument for carrying out so vast a task. He had deduced the main regulations of communal life from the customs of the elders and from his own experience, and with the help of legal fictions had laid the foundations of a systematic body of law. To pass from the legal system of Rome to the happy hunting-ground of our own lawyers—that miscellany of empirical decisions which we call the English law—may measure for us the clearness of the Roman's moral judgment. The Greeks had nothing which answered to the achievements of the Romans in this field. The youth of high station was instructed regularly in the principles and methods of law as a chief object of interest. To say that he knew laws divine and human was high praise for a Roman. It was a true instinct then that drove him to the study and development of his law. Here he became conversant with the most striking expression of the national genius.

The Roman was freed by his law from those perplexities which torture the modern. He had a norm of conduct laid down for him in precedent which rarely left him hesitating between contending duties. He was almost proof against the tempter who sets the spirit flying hither and thither on curious wings, and spreads before its gaze the kingdoms of the unrealized. The Roman, content to move on solid ground amid the things he knew and could handle, looked with amazement

at the Greek who fluttered undecided between earth and heaven. We are now at the very centre of the Roman mind as we light upon his quality of calm soberness, *gravitas*, literally weight, as opposed to the lightness, fickleness, frivolity which he despised in the Greek. The Roman soberness was just the obedience to *the customs of the fathers*, expressing itself through the whole nature and giving a specific character to every emotion and habit. It bound the diverse elements of life into one, and made a universe out of atoms. For obedience in the spiritual sphere answers to the attraction of gravity in the physical.

Justice at Rome was simply that which accorded with precedent, and with the constitution of the state, and had no reference to natural rights. In the eyes of the Roman no such rights existed. The citizen alone could be invested with rights at all. The *status* of each citizen was, so to speak, a perpetual unwritten contract between himself and the other members of the community, in accordance with which, he conducted himself in a prescribed manner, and received like treatment in return. But the stranger with whom no such contract existed, was absolutely at the mercy of the first comer, and gained the notice of the law only when he came under the protection of a Roman citizen. In the legal phrase of early times, the stranger and the enemy were the same. The mere adherence to the letter of contracts led to a spirit of chicanery, and belittled the Roman character to such an extent that the historian sets in undue relief the few instances which he can find of generous dealing. Just as frugality degenerated into avarice, so adherence to precedent produced the pettifogger, and the most powerful nation of ancient times descended on occasion to the methods of a rascally attorney.

The reverence for custom explains why the policy of the Roman senate was so successful. Whenever internal and external affairs ran their regular course, the traditional forms supplied a sufficient outlet for the political instincts of the citizens. The annual elections of the great officers of state, allowed the multitude to feel that they had a part in the

government. But these officials, when they were once elected, were little more than the instruments of the ruling oligarchy. The political tension being thus relieved from time to time, the Romans were freed from that feverish tampering with the constitution, which is the amusement of modern democracies. It seems to have been felt that the main business of a government was to govern and not to pass laws about governing. Of course, as the ancient constitution proved itself more and more unfit for the changing needs of a world-wide dominion, the discontent of the unprivileged classes found expression in vague political ideals, and these looked away of necessity from the past to the future. But it was the senatorial government, acting in the main upon traditional lines, that brought the whole world under the sway of the city upon the seven hills. The members of the great governing families of Rome gave of their best from age to age, and were content to be merged in the long roll-call of the servants of the state. Neither Marius nor Pompeius nor Cæsar deserve the credit of originating the foreign advance of the empire: they came in and reaped the harvest after laborers whose very names are almost lost.

As the power of the republic grew, and its history receded ever with more majesty into the irrevocable past, the corporate feeling deepened and produced that pride of citizenship which found its voice in the famous saying, *civis Romanus sum*. To have that on the lips and to recall the innumerable acts of service and self-denial, which in the ancient world gave those words their tremendous force, was a perpetual incentive to fresh obedience, and combined in the inmost recesses of the Roman mind with reverence for the customs of the fathers. How alien was all this to the love of individual notoriety, which in later times took the place of a laudable desire of public service! Cicero confesses with the utmost frankness that his leading motive was the love of glory, and with the examples of his great military contemporaries before him, remarks in the *Offices*, that those men who are most distinguished by their greatness of mind, are also bent on being the first of all, or rather upon a lonely supremacy.* No

* Pro Archia, 28 de offic. I, 64.

Roman of the early republic would have so expressed himself.

The Roman, calm, statesman-like and proud, was also courageous. Faithfully treading the narrow round of custom, he was undisturbed by calls to this side and that, and the patriotism which led him to sacrifice his life in battle was only one example the more of an obedience for which his whole life was a training. In some curious respects the national character was reflected exactly in the Roman military system. The intrenched camp formed every night, seemed to be a new Rome, with all its claims upon the affections, from which her sons sallied forth and to which they returned. Again, just as the elders at home infused their spirit throughout the city, so in the fields the ranks of the reserve, the veterans, steelled the hearts of the new levies to something of their own temper. It was not so much impetuous valor as calm persistence in the path entered upon, that brought the legions to victory. Savage and unregulated courage was broken to pieces against the steadfast Roman lines. There was a proverb, *Rome conquers by sitting still*. The temper which insured victory so often was a safeguard also in times of anxiety and defeat. After a crushing disaster the senate could thank the Roman commanders that they had not despaired of the state, and it could pursue its course, unmoved by the presence of the Carthaginian victor at the gates of the capital.

Many circumstances worked together to maintain the freedom of the Roman citizen. The senate itself was in a manner elected by the people. For it was recruited from the ranks of the magistrates chosen by them from year to year. The wisdom and influence of this body subdued to itself the most ambitious of the generals and magistrates, and not before the end of the fourth century of the republic were there serious attempts to wrest the law and the constitution to the will of an individual. For centuries the state knew no master, no military dictator in the modern sense. For even the ancient office of dictator, like other magistracies, was bound by traditional forms. In theory the people assembled in the *comitia* not only elected the magistrates, but passed laws, decided upon peace

and war, and upon all questions affecting the status of a citizen. In practice, the senate, as we have seen, controlled the executive. Yet the power of the people was there, and was resumed from time to time. It was the proud consciousness of these prerogatives that maintained the liberties of Rome, and the politician who succeeded in giving the color of usurpation to any proposals was an invincible bar to their enactment. Freedom was regarded as a precedent to be maintained rather than as an ideal to be followed. The scrupulousness with which he conformed to his obligations made the citizen exact a similar scrupulousness from his fellows, and inspired him with burning resentment when he imagined that his rights had been trespassed upon. Even in trifles he watched suspiciously any appearance of unequal treatment. The usages of good manners by which vanity is kept from unnecessary wounds were developed to a high degree at Rome. The attendant who kept his master informed of the name of the humblest citizens he might meet, so that every one might be addressed by name; the elaborate epithets which in the orators accompany the mention of the least conspicuous citizen, bear witness to the proud sense of equality before the law which animated every free man. The love of freedom, however, was consistent with the determination to limit it as far as possible to those who already enjoyed it. It was no abstract equality that commended itself to the Roman. The great reformer, Gaius Gracchus, lost his supporters when he proposed to extend the Roman franchise to the rest of Italy.

The Roman therefore exhibited in a striking manner both the excellences and the defects of a life which is controlled by rule and not by principle. He was faithful to the obligations of which he was conscious, but he did not apply their principles to new spheres of conduct. Hence it is that in his history we meet with so few traces of enthusiasm for an ideal or, indeed, of the generous emotions at all. Compared with the sentimental Teuton, he seems hard and cold. In this, if we may believe Mr. Marion Crawford, he is well represented by the Italian of the lower classes in the present. Only

power and wealth commanded his respect. The practical Roman turned with disdain from the subtle half-prophetic speculations of the Greek, and remembered that a well-to-do centurion could buy up a hundred apostles of philosophy. But wisdom was justified of her children. It was the quickening influence of Greek ideas that enabled the Roman government to adapt itself to the rule of the world.

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SOCIAL LIFE AND MORALITY IN INDIA.

I OFFER no apology for discussing this subject, as all thinking minds in the West take a very deep interest in the social and moral life of Eastern peoples.

During my sojourn in England it has struck me that the people here know either too much or too little of us,—too much because the Anglo-Indians (officials and missionaries) pretend to know everything about our people, often more than we know ourselves; too little, because those Englishmen who have not been over to India are deplorably ignorant of us. I say deplorably, because I think it is only right that the British people should have a correct idea of the various races with which they have to deal politically as well as commercially.

I have lived in England for over five years, and during this period I have had ample occasion to see something of English social life. It has deeply interested me, and I dare say it may be interesting to the readers of this JOURNAL if I tell them about our Indian social life in my own way. I do not propose to dwell upon the various creeds of the Indian people; but our religions are so vitally blended with our social customs as well as with our moral code that I may be obliged to refer to them now and then. I wish to give as faithful a picture of our life as I can, with all its fine as well as its faulty points. I am